

Paper 83 — The Marriage Institution

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Most endnotes and Urantia Book cross-references have been deleted to enhance readability.

Sources for Paper 83, in the order in which they appear

- (1) William Graham **Sumner** and Albert Galloway **Keller**, *The Science of Society, Volume III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927)
- (2) William Graham **Sumner**, Albert Galloway **Keller**, and Maurice Rea Davie, *The Science of Society, Volume IV* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1927)

Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights most parallelisms.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms occurring further apart, usually not in the same row.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the UB writer pointedly differ from each other.
- (e) **Blue** indicates original (or “revealed”) information, or UB-specific terminology and concepts. (What to highlight in this regard is debatable; the highlights are tentative.)
- (f) **Light green** indicates Bible passages or fragments thereof, which are not paralleled in the source text.

Matthew Block
6 March 2015

Work-in-progress Version 6 March 2015
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PAPER 83 — THE MARRIAGE INSTITUTION

83:0.1 This is the recital of the early beginnings of the institution of marriage. It has progressed steadily from the loose and promiscuous matings of the herd through many variations and adaptations, even to the appearance of those marriage standards which eventually culminated in the realization of pair matings, the union of one man and one woman to establish a home of the highest social order.

83:0.2 Marriage has been many times in jeopardy, and the marriage mores have drawn heavily on both property and religion for support; but the real influence which forever safeguards marriage and the resultant family is the simple and innate biologic fact that men and women positively will not live without each other, be they the most primitive savages or the most cultured mortals.

XLII: THE MARRIAGE-INSTITUTION
 (Sumner & Keller 1519)

§340. **Function of Marriage.** (Sumner & Keller 1526)

In its consequences the self-regarding act [of sex-passion] proves to be a cause and compulsion to sacrifice, the greatest in nature, that of parents for offspring.

83:0.3 It is because of the sex urge that selfish man is lured into making something better than an animal out of himself.

The self-regarding and self-gratifying sex relationship entails the certain consequences of self-denial

and insures the assumption of altruistic duties and numerous race-benefiting home responsibilities.

And the sacrifice rolls up on itself; for the more one sacrifices for an object the more he loves it, and the more he loves the more will he sacrifice (S&K 1530-31).

There is no question but that marriage has had as one of its chief functions the regulation of the sex-impulse and of sex-relations (S&K 1526).

There would be no occasion for setting marriage off from the industrial organization and property if it were not for the fact of human bi-sexuality (S&K 1526).

Rivers is of the opinion that the dominant function of marriage is its regulation of descent, inheritance, and succession: "The institution of marriage has two great functions:

it is the means of regulating sexual relations,

and it is the means of regulating descent, inheritance, and succession..." (S&K 1526).

When the history of marriage has been fully traced out, it will almost certainly be found that its function ... in the regulation of sexual relations remained indefinite long after the institution had reached a high degree of definiteness as a regulator of other social relations (S&K 1526).

Herein has sex been the unrecognized and unsuspected civilizer of the savage; for this same sex impulse automatically and unerringly *compels man to think*

and eventually *leads him to love*.

1. MARRIAGE AS A SOCIETAL INSTITUTION

83:1.1 Marriage is society's mechanism designed to regulate and control those many human relations

which arise out of the physical fact of bisexuality.

As such an institution, marriage functions in two directions:

1. In the regulation of personal sex relations.

2. In the regulation of descent, inheritance, succession, and social order,

this being its older and original function.

83:1.2 The family, which grows out of marriage, is itself a stabilizer of the marriage institution together with the property mores. Other potent factors in marriage stability are pride, vanity, chivalry, duty, and religious convictions.

§341. Marriage and the Other Institutions.
(Sumner & Keller 1532)

An occasional enthusiast is persuaded that “marriages are **made in Heaven,**” and more than a few contractants would not consider themselves married if there had been no religious ceremony. This idea, however, is a late one, for it is only in modern times that the church has introduced into the mores the idea that marriage is a religious matter (S&K 1535).

But while marriages may be approved or disapproved on high,

they are hardly **made in heaven.**

The human family is a distinctly human institution, an evolutionary development. Marriage is an institution of society, not a department of the church. True, religion should mightily influence it but should not undertake exclusively to control and regulate it.

XLI: WHAT MADE MARRIAGE
(Sumner & Keller 1485)

§335. Marriage and Maintenance. (Sumner & Keller 1505)

The union of the sexes is **primarily industrial.**

It has largely remained through history and is of that character now.

83:1.3 Primitive marriage was **primarily industrial;**

and even in modern times it is often a social or business affair.

Through the influence of the mixture of the Andite stock

In so far as it has become conjugal, parental, poetical, emotional, or ethical, that is due to advance of civilization and belongs to the higher grades of the cultured (S&K 1508).

and as a result of the mores of advancing civilization, marriage is slowly becoming mutual, romantic, parental, poetical, affectionate, ethical, and even idealistic.

§334.* **The Making of Marriage.** (Sumner & Keller 1494)

[S]election has unquestionably played a constant part in mating.... It is possible to collect cases of sex-preference in primitive marriage, ... but it is necessary to realize ... that romantic love is a comparatively modern phenomenon ... (S&K 1502-03).

Selection and so-called romantic love, however, were at a minimum in primitive mating.

[[Family-life] among a number of primitive peoples precludes much intimacy between husband and wife ... They had different work and food and they ate apart (S&K 2029-30).]

During early times husband and wife were not much together; they did not even eat together very often.

Conjugal affection ... does not go back to sex-difference

But among the ancients, personal affection was not strongly linked to sex attraction;

so much as to the fact of having lived together (S&K 1503).

they became fond of one another largely because of living and working together.

2. COURTSHIP AND BETROTHAL

XLVIII: FURTHER PRELIMINARIES TO MARRIAGE (Sumner & Keller 1665)

§368.* **Betrothal.** (Sumner & Keller 1688)

In Melanesia it is the custom for girls to be betrothed at birth and grow up in the house of the betrothed; a **boy and girl** are often betrothed by their **parents** at a very early age, and grow up recognizing each other as man and wife; and the boy's father works for the girl's father to cover the payment (S&K 1688).

Go-betweens, or **marriage-brokers**, are found in several lands (S&K 1689).

He is sometimes the **barber**, as in British India,

and again a special **priestlike** functionary, as among the Ghetto Jews (S&K 1692).

Regular marriage is a **group-matter** because the common corporate maintenance-interests are so intimately involved; a member does not live or marry unto himself alone (S&K 1693).

83:2.1 Primitive marriages were always planned by the **parents** of the **boy and girl**.

The transition stage between this custom and the times of free choosing was occupied by

the **marriage broker** or professional matchmaker.

These matchmakers were at first the **barbers**;

later, the **priests**.

Marriage was originally a **group affair**;

then a family matter; only recently has it become an individual adventure.

XLI: WHAT MADE MARRIAGE
(Sumner & Keller 1485)

§336. **The Subjection of Woman.** (Sumner & Keller 1509)

[contd] It is coercion rather than attraction for which we must look in the evolution of institutions; the first point to consider is how woman was forced into enduring union with man.

Upon her, as upon female animals in general, a certain aloofness was imposed by her sex, though just what Crawley means when he says that “there are grounds for ascribing to woman an almost instinctive physical dread of the male sex,” is not crystal-clear (S&K 1509-10).

Women have not yet ceased to feel a certain shame which was originally a product, in the mores, of the way men regarded them. A person who is deformed or disfigured generally withdraws from a sense of difference and inferiority; and the usages of primitive society inculcated this feeling in women from birth (S&K 1510).

XLVI: MARRIAGE-PRELIMINARIES
(Sumner & Keller 1623)

§358.* **“Capture-Marriage.”** (Sumner & Keller 1624)

Violent seizure of the possessions of out-groupers has been in the order of events from the earliest stages.... Hence it is to be expected, just as war preceded trade, that the capture of the out-groupers’ women, like that of their property, should antedate peaceful arrangements ... (S&K 1625).

83:2.2 Coercion, not attraction, was the approach to primitive marriage.

In early times woman had no sex aloofness,

only sex inferiority as inculcated by the mores.

As raiding preceded trading, so marriage by capture preceded marriage by contract.¹

Rivers ... suggests that the simulated capture came into existence as the result of ... an attempt to **escape from the dominance of the old men** and from their monopoly of the younger women of the community (S&K IV 890).

§359.* **Elopement.** (Sumner & Keller 1631)

In Australia, elopement is a method intermediate between that of **“charming”** and that of **capture**, for in the case of charming the initiative may be assumed by the woman (S&K 1632).

Among the Palaungs of Farther India, **elopement** is an integral part of the **wedding-ceremonies** (S&K 1634). [*See 1633-34 and Case Book for other cases.*]

§358.* **“Capture-Marriage.”** (Sumner & Keller 1624)

Though **mock-capture** might logically come under the topic of **wedding-ceremonies**, it may conveniently be detached for present treatment, forming as it does a transition from violence to composition through property-compensation (S&K 1628).

XLIX: THE WEDDING (Sumner & Keller 1695)

§371.* **Survivals and Symbols.** (Sumner & Keller 1705)

Ceremonial **resistance** and reluctance on the part of the bride, and sometimes, though much more rarely, of both bride and groom or of the groom alone, point back to a time when what is now counterfeit was actual (S&K 1707).

Some women would connive at capture in order to **escape the domination of the older men** of their tribe;

they preferred to fall into the hands of men of their own age from another tribe.

This pseudo elopement was the transition stage between **capture** by force and subsequent courtship by **charming**.

83:2.3 An early type of **wedding ceremony** was the mimic flight, a sort of **elopement** rehearsal which was once a common practice.

Later, **mock capture** became a part of the regular **wedding ceremony**.

A modern girl's pretensions to **resist** “capture,” to be reticent toward marriage, are all relics of olden customs.

“ ... Into connection with capture is also to be brought the custom that the bride, arrived at the bridegroom’s door, must be lifted by force **over the threshold**” (S&K 1707).

The carrying of the bride **over the threshold** is reminiscent of a number of ancient practices, among others, of the days of wife stealing.

L: WEDLOCK: STATUS OF WOMAN (Sumner & Keller 1731)

§379.* **Liberty-Rights.** (Sumner & Keller 1742)

When it comes to **self-disposal in marriage**, that is, consent to union, woman is found to have had much more to say about the matter than has sometimes been supposed (S&K 1746-47).

83:2.4 Woman was long denied full freedom of **self-disposal in marriage**,

but the more intelligent women have always been able to circumvent this restriction by the clever exercise of their wits.

Man has usually taken the lead in courtship, but not always.

If the woman takes the **initiative** and proposes, she is evidently in control of her destiny to a considerable degree, though, of course, not more so than the man (S&K 1747).

Woman sometimes formally, as well as covertly, **initiates** marriage.²

And as civilization has progressed, women have had an increasing part in all phases of courtship and marriage.

83:2.5 **Increasing love, romance, and personal selection in premarital courtship are an Andite contribution to the world races.**

XLII: THE MARRIAGE-INSTITUTION
(Sumner & Keller 1519)

§339. **The Regulation of the Sex-Impulse.**
(Sumner & Keller 1523)

The fashion in the modern age is to exalt [sex-passion] in a somewhat idealized form, so that sex-attraction is taking the position in marriage once held by considerations of property and service.

This brings impulse rather than calculation to the fore (S&K 1524).

XLVIII: FURTHER PRELIMINARIES
TO MARRIAGE (Sumner & Keller
1665)

§368.* **Betrothal.** (Sumner & Keller 1688)

In the old German law there was no distinction between betrothal and marriage: the distinction came in when the church was insisting strenuously upon its coöperation in marriage (S&K 1690).

[See S&K 1690 for cases.]

The period of betrothal is not seldom one of taboo on all relations between the betrothed. It is reasonable to interpret this inhibition as a precaution against premarital relations; yet the taboo as such always has a religious sanction and definite religious scruple appears now and then (S&K 1691).

The relations between the sexes are evolving favorably;

many advancing peoples are gradually substituting somewhat idealized concepts of sex attraction for those older motives of utility and ownership.

Sex impulse and feelings of affection are beginning to displace cold calculation in the choosing of life partners.

83:2.6 The betrothal was originally equivalent to marriage;

and among early peoples sex relations were conventional during the engagement.

In recent times, religion has established a sex taboo on the period between betrothal and marriage.

3. PURCHASE AND DOWRY

XLVII: PURCHASE AND DOWRY
(Sumner & Keller 1639)

§362. **Transitional Forms.** (Sumner & Keller 1650)

The prevailing notion until within two or three centuries has been that a mere **promise** can never be a firm basis for marriage; that **love** is a transitory emotion;

and that what is requisite to make a real marriage, that is, an institutional union founded upon permanent, positive, and **tangible** interests, is a **property-guarantee** (S&K 1650).

When, in the course of evolution, the terms of the struggle for existence came to be less harsh, it began to be felt that the making of gain from a daughter was base.... [The bride-price then] became a **forfeit** which the man could not demand back if he divorced the woman for no fault of hers (S&K 1651).

[[Marriage-marks] are like the **brands** set upon animal-property (S&K 1757).]

§361.* **Wife-Purchase.** (Sumner & Keller 1639)

In **Africa**, marriage has the prevailing character of purchase.

It has been noted before that a Kaffir despises a wife taken for love, that is, without payment, and **compares her with a cat**, which is the only animal got for nothing (S&K 1641).

83:3.1 The ancients mistrusted **love** and **promises**;

they thought that abiding unions must be **guaranteed** by some **tangible** security, **property**.

For this reason,

the purchase price of a wife was regarded as a **forfeit** or deposit which the husband was doomed to lose in case of divorce or desertion.

Once the purchase price of a bride had been paid, many tribes permitted the husband's **brand** to be burned upon her.³

Africans still buy their wives.

A love wife, or a white man's wife, they **compare to a cat** because she costs nothing.

The girl's family, in order to enhance her attractiveness and so to raise her purchase-price, sometimes practises a sort of advertising device, the **bride-show** (S&K 1649).

[Among certain Somals, the bride is **decorated** in pompous style for the sake of appearance and display. She is led about on foot or horseback, covered with oils and perfumes, in order to play upon the groom's feelings so that ... a **higher price** may be wrung from him (S&K 1649).]

“ ... If women were bought and **sold as any animal** might be, then they could also be traded and **transferred**, but this is certainly not so...” (S&K 1643).

Service is always a commutation of the bride-price, as in the case of Jacob, who is represented as serving fourteen years for two sisters ... (S&K 1648).

§363.* The “**Ambil-Anak**” (Sumner & Keller 1654)

These types of marriage *sine manu* are sometimes entered into when the man is too poor to pay the bride-price and does not revolt at evasion ... (S&K 1657).

“When a [Sumatran] man marries after the custom, called *ambil-anak*, he pays no money to the father of the bride, but becomes one of his family, and is entirely upon the footing of a son; the father of his wife being thenceforward answerable for his debts, etc., in the same manner as his own children ...” (S&K 1656).

83:3.2 The **bride shows** were occasions for dressing up and **decorating** daughters for public exhibition with the idea of their bringing **higher prices** as wives.

But they were not **sold as animals**—among the later tribes such a wife was not **transferable**.

Neither was her purchase always just a cold-blooded money transaction;

service was equivalent to cash in the purchase of a wife.

If an otherwise desirable man could not pay for his wife,

he could be adopted as a son by the girl's father and then could marry.

§361.* **Wife-Purchase.** (Sumner & Keller 1639)

“... In various ways the poverty of a man need not be an impediment to his marriage; even **if** the cupidity of the father is not to be overcome,

the tribal authorities will always sanction it if the young people **elope**” (S&K 1644).

Among the Kabyles a girl is sold in marriage and the laws of humanity and modesty are not respected in the bargain; but a Saharan Arab **father is ashamed to sell his daughter,**

although the form of marriage is by purchase.

He **gives** as much as he gets, and the groom pays only half the petty price agreed upon.

Here is the germ of **dowry** (S&K IV 907).

§364.* **Dowry.** (Sumner & Keller 1658)

In general, the dowry came in Greece to be thought almost necessary to make the distinction between a wife and a **concubine** ... (S&K IV 923).

And **if** a poor man sought a wife and could not meet the price demanded by a grasping father,

the elders would often bring pressure to bear upon the father which would result in a modification of his demands, or else there might be an **elopement.**

83:3.3 As civilization progressed,

fathers did not like to appear to sell their daughters,

and so, while continuing to accept the bride purchase price,

they initiated the custom of **giving** the pair valuable presents which about equaled the purchase money.

And upon the later discontinuance of payment for the bride,

these presents became the bride's **dowry.**

83:3.4 The idea of a dowry was to convey the impression of the bride's independence, to suggest far removal from the times of slave wives and **property companions.**

With some of the Filipinos, marriage centered about the dowry and was a species of trade. A man could renounce his wife at any time without justifying the divorce, but he had to **pay back the dowry** or its equivalent (S&K IV 921).

In the Code of Hammurabi can be traced the beginning of dowry. A present to **bind** a betrothal is made to the bride's father ... If the groom breaks the engagement, he **forfeits** it; also, a like sum is **forfeited** by the girl's father if he break the contact. [Etc.] (S&K IV 922)

§363.* The "Ambil-Anak" (Sumner & Keller 1654)

[contd] The typical **transitional form lying somewhere between purchase and dowry**, and of which an exceptionally full description is available, is the *ambil-anak* union of Sumatra.

Over against it is set the *jujur* form, or marriage with bride-price, which is the regular type....

The peoples of south Sumatra are under the patriarchal system: the regular practice is for the bride to leave her own family and go over to that of her husband for good and all, her **children belonging to her husband's family** (S&K 1654).

"In [the *ambil-anak* form of] marriage the woman remains in the house of her parents, which the man enters, and the children **belong to the mother's family** (S&K 1656).

A man could not divorce a dowered wife without **paying back the dowry** in full.

Among some tribes a mutual deposit was made with the parents of both bride and groom to be **forfeited** in case either deserted the other,

in reality a marriage **bond**.

During the period of **transition from purchase to dowry**,

if the wife were purchased, the **children belonged to the father**;

if not, they **belonged to the wife's family**.

4 . THE WEDDING CEREMONY

XLIX: THE WEDDING (Sumner & Keller 1695)

§369.* Reason for the Ceremony. (Sumner & Keller 1695)

[contd] Ceremonial surrounds all the events of life which seem important to men (S&K 1695).

Marriage is not only indissolubly linked with property; it is itself a species of property-tenure (S&K 1696).

It is vital to society that the entrance of its members into the status of wedlock shall be generally known, so that they and their offspring can thereafter be “placed” in their setting as husbands, wives, children, families ... (S&K 1696).

83:4.1 The wedding ceremony grew out of the fact that marriage was originally a community affair, not just the culmination of a decision of two individuals. Mating was of group concern as well as a personal function.

83:4.2 Magic, ritual, and ceremony surrounded the entire life of the ancients, and marriage was no exception.

As civilization advanced, as marriage became more seriously regarded, the wedding ceremony became increasingly pretentious.

Early marriage was a factor in property interests, even as it is today,

and therefore required a legal ceremony,

while the social status of subsequent children demanded the widest possible publicity.

Of such records the primitive people can possess none. All they can have is witnesses. Yet primitive marriage needs publicity quite as much as does civilized marriage. Hence the recourse to ceremonial. The more witnesses there are, and the more deeply the occasion has been impressed upon their minds, the more reliable the record ... (S&K 1697).

§370.* **The Nature of the Ceremony.**
(Sumner & Keller 1699)

In some of the cases where small attention seems to be paid to what might be called the actual wedding, the young man and woman have recently been specifically labelled as marriageable and so about to marry, so that the observed fact of their living together proclaims them man and wife. Even so, there is usually at least some little publication of the fact that a union has been contracted which is confirmatory of expectations (S&K 1700).

“That the eating together, as a sacramental proceeding, must have a more or less religious character, is evident, though this comes into the foreground more with one people than with another” (S&K 1703).

In western Australia, “when a girl is old enough to be claimed as a wife she is handed over by her father to the husband, who takes her away to his own camp. There does not seem to be any ceremony on such an occasion” (S&K IV 948).

Primitive man had no records; therefore must the marriage ceremony be witnessed by many persons.

83:4.3 At first the wedding ceremony was more on the order of a betrothal

and consisted only in public notification of intention of living together;

later it consisted in formal eating together.

Among some tribes the parents simply took their daughter to the husband;

The marriage ceremony [in East Malekula, New Hebrides] is held at the village of the bridegroom ... The relatives of the bridegroom first carry across the square beautiful *Dracæna* leaves and poisoned arrows, and hand them over to the relatives of the bride as a token of peace between the two villages... A **return present**, consisting of one tusk-pig, is made to the bridegroom's friends ... (S&K IV 948-949).

Among the Jews, formal betrothal was considered proper in rabbinical days and came to be the real wedding. There were three modes: (1) by gift of valuables or money ...; (2) by a document; and (3) **by copulation**... Each mode of wedding was of equal validity, but in the third century A.D. the third was forbidden (S&K IV 950).

[?]

§372.* **Religious Aspects.** (Sumner & Keller 1713)

To [primitive people] **childlessness** is but one of the unreckonable and inexplicable ills of life.

Hence it is **referred at once to spiritual agency**; in fact, it is often represented as being called down by a curse, that is, by invocation of the spirits who produce it ... (S&K 1714).

[H]ence the entrance of religion into marriage, in the guise of some ritual or ceremony designed to ward off this misfortune (S&K 1714).

in other cases the only ceremony was the formal **exchange of presents**,

after which the bride's father would present her to the groom.

Among many Levantine peoples it was the custom to dispense with all formality, marriage being consummated **by sex relations**.

The **red man** was the first to develop the more elaborate celebration of weddings.

83:4.4 **Childlessness** was greatly dreaded,

and since barrenness was **attributed to spirit machinations**,

efforts to insure fecundity also led to the association of marriage with certain magical or religious ceremonials.

And in this effort to insure a happy and fertile marriage, many charms were employed;

XLVIII: FURTHER PRELIMINARIES TO MARRIAGE (Sumner & Keller 1665)

§368.* **Betrothal.** (Sumner & Keller 1688)

In Tibet, as in China, astrologers are consulted to see that the horoscopes of the man and woman do not antagonize ... (S&K 1693).

even the astrologers were consulted to ascertain the birth stars of the contracting parties.

XLIX: THE WEDDING (Sumner & Keller 1695)

§373.* **Defensive and Propitiatory Measures.** (Sumner & Keller 1715)

In certain Hindu families, "it was customary for the bridegroom, at the marriage ceremony, to cut off the head of a human figure made of dough, with a knife supplied by the bride's family. That pointed to the fact that human sacrifice had at one time been performed at Hindu marriages" (S&K 1722).

At one time the human sacrifice was a regular feature of all weddings among well-to-do people.

83:4.5 Lucky days were sought out,

In mediæval Germany, "marriages made under the waxing moon or at full moon had the guarantee of wholesome blessing. They still hold to this at the present day. . . . Marriages consummated on Thursday . . . secure against all witch-work and magic" (S&K 1715).

Thursday being most favorably regarded, and weddings celebrated at the full of the moon were thought to be exceptionally fortunate.

Wilken makes special mention of the practice of strewing grain at a wedding. It is an ancient Hebrew custom but is found commonly in the Indian Archipelago, except that here it is rice that is used.

It was the custom of many Near Eastern peoples to throw grain upon the newly-weds;

The interpretation has been along the line of symbolism, that the grain meant **fecundity**; it is accompanied often by invocation of the blessing of fruitfulness upon the bride (S&K 1721).

Exorcistic practices also attend the wedding; and **fire and water** play their usual rôle as banishers of evil influences (S&K 1716).

The groom [in the Hindu marriage-ceremony] leads the bride by the right hand before the **altar-fire** and speaks certain formulas ...” (S&K 1717).

Holy water is poured on the heads of the pair and they receive a blessing. Fire is called to witness when the vows are made. The groom then sprinkles a little water on the bride’s head, and the two worship the sun (S&K 1717-18).

§374.* The Continuance of Precaution. (Sumner & Keller 1725)

Among other means of evading peril is the deferring of consummation, which amounts to misleading the lurking spirits that are ready to damage the health or fecundity of the parties and their prospective children (S&K 1725).

§373.* Defensive and Propitiatory Measures. (Sumner & Keller 1715)

[See S&K IV 952 re the Chinese brawl-room custom.]

this was a magical rite which was supposed to insure **fecundity**.

Certain Oriental peoples used **rice** for this purpose.

83:4.6 **Fire and water** were always considered the best means of resisting ghosts and evil spirits;

hence **altar fires** and lighted candles,

as well as the baptismal sprinkling of **holy water**,

were usually in evidence at weddings.

For a long time it was customary to set a false wedding day and then suddenly postpone the event so as to put the ghosts and spirits off the track.

83:4.7 The **teasing** of newlyweds and the pranks played upon honeymooners are all relics of those far-distant days when it was thought best to

A stock method of averting daimonic attention is by **appearing to be miserable** or unlucky. The efficacy of vituperation and **teasing** in general has been mentioned elsewhere; practices with the same end in view are to be found in the wedding-ceremonial (S&K 1719).

The **bridal veil** is taken by some to be, like the mourning veil, a species of **disguise** from the spirits.

It is hard to find another explanation that accounts for it better; under its protection the bride withdraws herself safely from the service and control of **jealous family-spirits** (S&K 1718).

The idea that the **bride's foot must not touch the earth** is worked out in the Hervey or Cook Islands as follows: "They are not content with mats wherewith to make a pathway for the bride to walk along. But should she be the eldest girl, the members of her husband's tribe lie down flat on the ground, while she walks lightly over their backs..." (S&K 1719).

The **mediaeval priest blessed the marriage-bed** in order to **exorcise demons** from it,

appear miserable and ill at ease in the sight of the spirits so as to avoid arousing their envy.

The wearing of the **bridal veil** is a relic of the times when it was considered necessary to **disguise** the bride so that ghosts might not recognize her

and also to hide her **beauty** from the gaze of the otherwise **jealous and envious spirits**.

The **bride's feet must never touch the ground** just prior to the ceremony.

Even in the twentieth century it is still the custom under the Christian mores to stretch carpets from the carriage landing to the church altar.

83:4.8 One of the most ancient forms of the wedding ceremony was to have a **priest bless the wedding bed** to insure the fertility of the union;

this was done long before any formal wedding ritual was established.

During this period in the evolution of the marriage mores

and the **wedding-guests** visited the spouses after they had retired because they thus **witnessed the concubitus** on which the law laid stress as making a marriage (S&K 1720).

§372.* **Religious Aspects.** (Sumner & Keller 1713)

The tests of man and woman point to the significance attached to the marriage-relation. Yet there is always room for doubt ... The **luck-element** enters largely and must be **insured against**.

This involves the entrance of religion and the **priest** (S&K 1713).

[*Compare:* Until 1563, marriage was valid without ecclesiastical benediction; the Council of Trent made it essentially a religious ceremony (S&K 1724).]

the **wedding guests** were expected to file through the bedchamber at night, thus constituting legal **witness to the consummation** of marriage.

83:4.9 The **luck element**, that in spite of all premarital tests certain marriages turned out bad, led primitive man to seek **insurance** protection **against** marriage failure;

led him to go in quest of **priests** and magic.

And this movement culminated directly in modern church weddings.

But for a long time marriage was generally recognized as consisting in the decisions of the contracting parents—later of the pair—

while for the last five hundred years church and state have assumed jurisdiction and now presume to make pronouncements of marriage.

5. PLURAL MARRIAGES

XLIII: THE FORMATIVE STAGE
(Sumner & Keller 1547)

§345. **Monandry.** (Sumner & Keller 1559)

[contd] Setting aside what is purely inferential concerning the matter of sex-relations and taking our stand upon the observed facts of ethnography, we can be sure, first of all, that the **women of a tribe belong to the men of that tribe** and are tabooed to outsiders.

Within the tribe, further, a woman generally, if not always, appertained to **one man at a time** and there was some small duration in sex-association (S&K 1559).

Monandry is the extreme of observable unregulation. It is true that inference leads safely to the conviction that there was once still less of restriction, that is, a previous state without combination of even so loose an order; but what the arrangements in that far-off time may have been cannot be said (S&K 1560).

Monandry is ... so far from pair-marriage that, as the term monandry implies, a single man may contract **temporary** unions with several women at the same time, though each woman is held to one man at a time (S&K 1561).

83:5.1 In the early history of marriage the unmarried **women belonged to the men of the tribe.**

Later on, a woman had only **one husband at a time.**

This practice of *one-man-at-a-time* was the first step away from the promiscuity of the herd.

While a woman was allowed but one man, her husband could sever such **temporary** relationships at will.

But these loosely regulated associations were the first step toward

Whether to **live herd-wise or pair-wise** is a question of the mode of the food-quest. The horde and the family are before us both at once; we see their relation to each other, but it is the family, not the horde, which is the primordial societal unit (S&K 1563).

In separation the wife “left the home of her husband, taking with her their children, who were regarded as exclusively her own, and her personal effects, upon which her husband had no claim ...” (S&K 1561).

§346.* **Group-Marriage.** (Sumner & Keller 1563)

[contd] If one starts from monandry as the loosest form of sex-association, he comes almost at once upon a primitive system, called “**group marriage**, which has been taken by some to be no more than a specially limited **communalism** or promiscuity (S&K 1563).

A modification of group-marriage occurs where a **set of brothers marry a set of sisters**, an arrangement which Cæsar reports of the Britons; to this form the Polynesian term *punalua* has been attached (S&K 1565).

Group-marriage is not the same as **communal marriage**; it is a narrowed and evolved arrangement which points back to the latter (S&K 1565).

living pairwise in distinction to living herdwise.

In this stage of marriage development children usually belonged to the mother.

83:5.2 The next step in mating evolution was the **group marriage**.

This **communal** phase of marriage had to intervene in the unfolding of family life because the marriage mores were not yet strong enough to make pair associations permanent.

The brother and sister marriages belonged to this group;

five brothers of one family would marry five sisters of another.

All over the world the looser forms of **communal marriage** gradually evolved into various types of **group marriage**.

Group-marriage arises after groups and sub-groups with **totems** have come into being and have become related to each other so that they are either concubitant or taboo, that is, foreordained to mate or not to mate with one another (S&K 1565).

And these group associations were largely regulated by the **totem** mores.

Family life slowly and surely developed because sex and marriage regulation favored the survival of the tribe itself by insuring the survival of larger numbers of children.

LIII: PLURAL AND PAIR-MARRIAGE
(Sumner & Keller 1855)

§397.* **Polyandry.** (Sumner & Keller 1857)

83:5.3 Group marriages gradually gave way before the emerging practices of polygamy—polygyny and **polyandry**—among the more advanced tribes.

[contd] As a form of plural marriage, polyandry is about as rare as the group-marriage with which it is connected by some writers (S&K 1857).

But polyandry was never general,

“In Uganda polyandry is practised by two women only—the dowager **queen** . . . and the queen sister...” (S&K 1857).

being usually limited to **queens**

Polyandry in Ceylon is said to be practised chiefly by the **rich** (S&K 1026).

and **rich** women;

furthermore, it was customarily a family affair,

Cunningham reports **one wife for a family of brothers.** The number of husbands, usually two, may be three or four (S&K 1858).

one wife for several brothers.

Among the stock cases of polyandry that of the Nairs is prominent. They are the ruling caste on the Malabar Coast and are militaristic. Their women may not marry in a lower caste nor in the same household ... (S&K 1859).

Economic reasons are given [for polyandry among the higher classes in Lhasa]: the Chinese tax each house in which there is a married woman, this making women the basis of taxation if married, while other women pay nothing. Hence the men club together with one wife (S&K 1858).

There are, indeed, no convincing instances of actual marriage between a woman and a second husband while the first is yet alive; all the ceremony goes with the original wedding.

The additional so-called husbands are always secondary mates without much or any status ... (S&K 1860).

LIV: POSTERITY (Sumner & Keller 1885)

§406.* Sterility and Fecundity. (Sumner & Keller 1898)

[Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother (Luke 20:28).]

The levirate, says Tylor, appears in its various forms among a list of one hundred and twenty peoples, or about one in three of his collection.

Caste

and economic restrictions sometimes made it necessary for several men to content themselves with one wife.

Even then, the woman would marry only one,

the others being loosely tolerated as "uncles" of the joint progeny.

83:5.4 The Jewish custom

requiring that a man consort with his deceased brother's widow for the purpose of "raising up seed for his brother,"

was the custom of more than half the ancient world.

“On taking out its adhesions, it seems sufficiently accounted for as a custom of substitution, belonging to the period when marriage is a compact not so much between two **individuals** as between two **families** ...” (S&K 1904).

LIII: PLURAL AND PAIR-MARRIAGE
(Sumner & Keller 1855)

§400.* **Monogyny.** (Sumner & Keller 1874)

Four classes of wives are reported from Siam:

“the first is the wife of royal gift; the second the **legal wife**:

the third, the **wife of affection**;

[The concubine may be procured [among the Chinese, by] the simple exchange of a written **contract** and a pecuniary consideration ... (S&K IV 1040).]

the fourth, the **slave wife**—that is, the handmaid who has borne children to her master, and in consequence is manumitted” (S&K IV 1040).

§399. **Some Features of Polygyny.** (Sumner & Keller 1871)

Recalling the status of the **chief wife** brings us around again to the fact that most instances of polygyny are really cases of monogyny. **Real polygyny** exists only “where several women hold over against the one man a like jural position and where the children of all are regarded as begotten in perfectly valid matrimony.” Such cases have been found to be so **rare** that it has not seemed worth while to seek to set them apart (S&K 1874).

This was a relic of the time when marriage was a **family** affair rather than an **individual** association.

83:5.5 The institution of polygyny recognized, at various times,

four sorts of wives:

1. The ceremonial or **legal wives**.
2. **Wives of affection** and permission.
3. Concubines, **contractual** wives.
4. **Slave wives**.

83:5.6 **True polygyny**, where all the wives are of equal status and all the children equal, has been very **rare**.

Usually, even with plural marriages, the home was dominated by the **head wife**, the status companion.

§396. Numerical Limitation; the Status-Wife. (Sumner & Keller 1855)

The status-wife is the wife of **ceremony** and publicity; it is she who costs the bride-price or brings the dowry, that is, whose station is stabilized by the passage of property;

it is her children only who inherit, for she is the sole selected and publicly avowed agency for carrying on the family-line (S&K 1856).

[?]

She may or may not be the **love-wife**; for love is incidental to wedlock and is perhaps more likely to traverse the marriage-relation than otherwise (S&K 1856).

[[T]he love-wife was often, perhaps regularly, only incidentally the status-wife (S&K 1502).]

§400.* Monogyny. (Sumner & Keller 1874)

[contd] This form, doubtless the most common in the race's history, is characterized by the presence of **one wife of status**, or jural wife,

She alone had the ritual wedding **ceremony**,

and only the children of such a purchased or dowered spouse could inherit

unless by special arrangement with the status wife.

83:5.7 The status wife was not necessarily the **love wife**;

in early times she usually was not.

The love wife, or sweetheart, did not appear until the races were considerably advanced, **more particularly after the blending of the evolutionary tribes with the Nodites and Adamites.**

83:5.8 The taboo wife—**one wife of legal status**—created the concubine mores.

Under these mores a man might have only one wife,

together with an indefinite number of consorts who have no such status (S&K 1874)

Concubinage has been said to “temper polygyny toward monogamy” and also to be one of the “polygamic palliatives” to monogamic marriage (S&K 1874).

A system of concubinage exists among the Chinese very similar to that practised among the Hebrews or that permitted under the Roman law.... “Concubines ... are generally chosen from amongst the lower classes, the confidential or favorite handmaidens of the wife, who follow her from her father’s roof, being often selected for the purpose ...” (S&K IV 1040).

The wife is considered the mother of all the children born in the family (S&K IV 1040). [*See also S&K IV 1041.*]

§399. **Some Features of Polygyny.** (Sumner & Keller 1871)

Westermarck sums up the factors favoring polygyny as follows: danger to males; excess of female births; avoidance of periodic continence, due to taboos on the pregnant and nursing wife; attraction of youth and beauty, in the taking of a younger wife ... [Etc.] (S&K 1873)

§398.* **Polygyny.** (Sumner & Keller 1864)

[See 84:4.9.]

but he could maintain sex relations with any number of concubines.

Concubinage was the steppingstone to monogamy, the first move away from frank polygyny.

The concubines of the Jews, Romans, and Chinese were very frequently the handmaidens of the wife.

Later on, as among the Jews, the legal wife was looked upon as the mother of all children born to the husband.

83:5.9 The olden taboos on sex relations with a pregnant or nursing wife tended greatly to foster polygyny.

Primitive women aged very early because of frequent childbearing coupled with hard work. (Such overburdened wives only managed to exist by virtue of the fact that they were put in isolation one week out of each month when they were not heavy with child.)

SOURCE OR PARALLEL

URANTIA PAPER 83

A woman [in Greenland] who is tired of bearing children asks her husband to take a second wife (S&K 1870).

Such a wife often grew tired of bearing children and would request her husband to take a second and younger wife,

one able to help with both childbearing and the domestic work.

In East Africa "... No man has more wives than his live stock and his plantations warrant, and the wife or wives installed in the 'boma' seem utterly devoid of jealousy. A new wife is hailed with delight, and the established household exert themselves to the utmost to do her honor" (S&K IV 1030).

The new wives were therefore usually hailed with delight by the older spouses;

there existed nothing on the order of sex jealousy.

Polygyny is the rule among the Dinkas, where "the number of wives is only limited by the ability of the husband to support them" (S&K IV 1031).

83:5.10 The number of wives was only limited by the ability of the man to provide for them.

"The rate of mortality among Palaung children is very high... I knew the head-man of a village near Namhsan whose wife bore to him thirteen children. Twelve died young ... The wife, who loved children, was greatly distressed. Her husband was a rich man who owned large tea gardens, and she feared that the only remaining son might die too ... She therefore begged her husband to take another wife ..." (S&K IV 1031-32).

Wealthy and able men wanted large numbers of children, and since the infant mortality was very high, it required an assembly of wives to recruit a large family.

[Westermarck sums up the factors favoring polygyny as follows: ... the desire for women as laborers and as badges of distinction and as means of winning power (S&K 1873).]

Many of these plural wives were mere laborers, slave wives.

83:5.11 Human customs evolve, but very slowly.

Von Kremer explains the persistence of polygyny in the Orient through the facts that it quickly increases the family-group and thus satisfies the need for descendants ... He draws attention to its maladaptation, however, by describing conditions in a typical harem ... (S&K IV 1037).

A Bechuana chief who, turning Christian, repudiated all his wives but one,

made enemies of all their relatives and destroyed his authority and the discipline of the tribe (S&K 1867).

The purpose of a harem was to build up a strong and numerous body of blood kin for the support of the throne.

A certain chief was once convinced that he should not have a harem, that he should be contented with one wife; so he promptly dismissed his harem.

The dissatisfied wives went to their homes,

and their offended relatives swept down on the chief in wrath and did away with him then and there.

6. TRUE MONOGAMY — PAIR MARRIAGE

§401. **Monogamy; Pair-Marriage.** (Sumner & Keller 1878)

If monogamy is best for those who marry, it cannot be overlooked that it costs heavily to those who are ruled out. They pay for the extra happiness of the married by their own misfortune. Monogamy is monopoly ... (S&K 1879).

[See eight rows down.]

83:6.1 Monogamy is monopoly; it is good for those who attain this desirable state, but it tends to work a biologic hardship on those who are not so fortunate.

But quite regardless of the effect on the individual, monogamy is decidedly best for the children.

It is a fact which will receive sufficient attention that in all ages and under all systems the poor have had to get along with one consort where the rich have had more or many. Such monogamy by **force of circumstances** turns immediately into monogyny or polygyny with a favorable shift of fortune (S&K 1878).

Monogamy makes for uniformity and for the closest sort of monopoly and restriction. It is **cultural** and **artificial**, being maintained as a system that is entirely **“unnatural”** by dogmas and institutions which, it cannot be denied, jeopardize the happiness of many (S&K 1878-79).

The early Mohammedan jurists “recognize expressly the right of the woman to impose the pre-marital condition that her husband **shall marry no second wife and keep no concubine.”**

Aristotle opposes all sex-relations outside marriage. “Monogamy was, from the earliest times, strictly enjoined; and it was one of the great benefits that have resulted from the expansion of **Roman** power that it made this type dominant in Europe...” (S&K 1881).

83:6.2 The earliest monogamy was due to **force of circumstances**, poverty.

Monogamy is **cultural** and societal, **artificial** and **unnatural**,

that is, unnatural to evolutionary man. It was wholly natural to the purer Nodites and Adamites and has been of great cultural value to all advanced races.

83:6.3 The Chaldean tribes recognized the right of a wife to impose a premarital pledge upon her spouse **not to take a second wife or concubine;**

both the Greeks and the **Romans** favored monogamous marriage.

The expediency of monogamy has been developed at some length by Spencer. Where the sexes are nearly equal in number, it may even surpass polygyny in the production of offspring; marriage is more stable; the family bond is stronger and integrates the monogamic society; the development of **ancestor-worship**, once a strongly unifying bond, is promoted (S&K 1882).

[contd from two rows up] “ ... Partly by raising it into a **sacrament**, and partly by representing it as, in some mysterious and not very definable sense, an image of the union of Christ and His Church, a feeling was fostered that a lifelong union of one man and one woman is, under all circumstances, the single form of intercourse between the sexes which is not illegitimate” (S&K 1881).

[contd from two rows up] There is a decreased mortality in offspring [under monogamy], once the barbaric stage is outgrown; **children are better reared** and quantity of reproduction is subordinated to quality; the position of both women and children is ameliorated; the passion of love is refined; the **standard of living rises**; those who have passed the reproductive period receive better care (S&K 1882).

LVIII: RETROSPECTIVE (Sumner & Keller 2041)

§430.* **The Function of Idealization.**
(Sumner & Keller 2043)

At the time of Christ the **whole civilized Western world** had reached the stage in which actual monogamy was, for economic reasons, the practice of all but the rich and great.

Ancestor worship has always fostered monogamy,

as has the Christian error of regarding marriage as a **sacrament**.

Even the **elevation of the standard of living** has consistently militated against plural wives.

By the time of **Michael's advent on Urantia** practically **all of the civilized world** had attained the level of theoretical monogamy.

This, however, was not pair-marriage, for polygyny was fully tolerated in the mores everywhere (S&K IV 1165).

§433. The Pair-Marriage Monopoly.
(Sumner & Keller 2052)

As was said above, the monopoly of pair-marriage, regarded as a societal institution, is maintained by laws and mores which are a life-constraint on the adult unmarried and for which there is for them no compensation whatever. It is astonishing that in such discussion of marriage as takes place little heed is ever paid to this aspect of the matter (S&K 2054).

Any monopoly is an advantage to those who are inside it; its victims are those who cannot get in (S&K 2054).

The unmarried not only have missed all that phase of life which comes under marriage but they are expected to take all the burden and fulfil all the sacrifice which falls upon them

in order that the walls and buttresses of pair-marriage may remain intact, to the benefit of those who are inside and who are enjoying the benefit (S&K 2054).

But this passive monogamy did not mean that mankind had become habituated to the practice of real pair marriage.

83:6.4 While pursuing the monogamic goal of the ideal pair marriage, which is, after all, something of a monopolistic sex association,

society must not overlook the unenviable situation of those unfortunate men and women who fail to find a place in this new and improved social order, even when having done their best to co-operate with, and enter into, its requirements.

Failure to gain mates in the social arena of competition may be due to insurmountable difficulties or multitudinous restrictions which the current mores have imposed.

Truly, monogamy is ideal for those who are in, but it must inevitably work great hardship on those who are left out in the cold of solitary existence.

83:6.5 Always have the unfortunate few had to suffer

that the majority might advance under the developing mores of evolving civilization;

but always should the favored majority look with kindness and consideration on their less fortunate fellows who must pay the price of failure to attain membership in the ranks of those ideal sex partnerships which afford the satisfaction of all biologic urges under the sanction of the highest mores of advancing social evolution.

LIII: PLURAL AND PAIR-MARRIAGE
(Sumner & Keller 1855)

§401. **Monogamy; Pair-Marriage.** (Sumner & Keller 1878)

Whether or not these specific contentions of Spencer are accepted, it is clear that pair-marriage tends to become the **ideal**, if not the prevalent form in the mores, of somewhat advanced peoples (S&K 1882).

LVIII: RETROSPECTIVE (Sumner & Keller 2041)

§432. **Modern Pair-Marriage.** (Sumner & Keller 2049)

Pair-marriage costs self-denial if it is desired that it shall be maintained in its purity;

that appears to be the reason why it is so imperfectly realized anywhere (S&K 2051).

83:6.6 Monogamy always has been, now is, and forever will be the **idealistic** goal of human sex evolution.

This ideal of true **pair marriage entails self-denial,**

and therefore does it so often fail

just because one or both of the contracting parties are deficient in that acme of all human virtues, rugged self-control.

LIII: PLURAL AND PAIR-MARRIAGE
(Sumner & Keller 1855)

§401. **Monogamy; Pair-Marriage.** (Sumner & Keller 1878)

Property-monopoly and sex-monopoly are kin expedients which have demonstrated their **indispensability** to society (S&K 1883).

There is a privacy about pair-marriage which, though it allows to abuse and secret imposition and suffering, is yet conducive to **refinement of feeling and of character.** Polygyny “brings the privacies of conjugal life, which should remain secrets between husband and wife, before a larger circle and thus weakens feminine modesty and the **delicacy of moral sentiment**” (S&K 1883).

LVIII: RETROSPECTIVE (Sumner & Keller 2041)

§432. **Modern Pair-Marriage.** (Sumner & Keller 2049)

In polygyny wives are **set in rivalry** with each other, a rivalry which, if they have attained to sensitiveness, they can prosecute only at the expense of dignity and individuality (S&K 2051).

83:6.7 Monogamy is the yardstick which measures the advance of social civilization as distinguished from purely biologic evolution. Monogamy is not necessarily biologic or natural,

but it is **indispensable** to the immediate maintenance and further development of social civilization.

It contributes to a **delicacy of sentiment, a refinement of moral character,**

and a spiritual growth which are utterly impossible in polygamy.

A woman never can become an ideal mother when she is all the while compelled to

engage in rivalry for her husband's affections.

LIII: PLURAL AND PAIR-MARRIAGE
(Sumner & Keller 1855)

§401. **Monogamy; Pair-Marriage.** (Sumner & Keller 1878)

In true pair-marriage the privacy alluded to above may work out into an **understanding intimacy** of one with the other, wherein a wedded pair supplement each other not alone in self-maintenance or in the rearing of children but in the life of sentiment and of the spirit (S&K 1884).

Thus may a relation that began its evolution in **crudeness and coercion**

refine itself through the ages, and despite life's mischances, into the highest and most durable of earthly satisfactions (S&K 1884).

LII: **DISSOLUTION OF WEDLOCK**
(Sumner & Keller 1831)

§392.* **Divorce.** (Sumner & Keller 1831)

In general among the North American Indians, divorce, though discreditable, could easily be effected. "The **marriage bond is loose**, and may, with few exceptions, be dissolved by the wife as well as by the husband.

The children generally stay with their mother, and **always** do in tribes having maternal clans" (S&K 1836-37).

83:6.8 Pair marriage favors and fosters that **intimate understanding** and effective co-operation which is best for parental happiness, child welfare, and social efficiency.

Marriage, which began in **crude coercion**,

is gradually evolving into a magnificent institution of self-culture, self-control, self-expression, and self-perpetuation.

7. THE DISSOLUTION OF WEDLOCK

83:7.1 In the early evolution of the marital mores,

marriage was a loose union which could be terminated at will,

and the children **always** followed the mother;

[?]

[*Compare*: The woman is divorced because she is barren or is, by reason of weakness, sickness, laziness, or other defect, a poor worker; the man because he is a poor provider or is cruel or impotent (S&K 1832-33).]

The woman is much more commonly **blamed** and divorced than the man, especially in case of an unfruitful union; it does not seem to occur to the savage, save under exceptional circumstances, that the man may be at fault (S&K 1833).

[[S]ome peoples in the Indian Archipelago believe that in the spirit-world the **childless wife** bears a **snake** in her bosom as a punishment (S&K 1900).]

When woman was property, of course she had no right to divorce any more than a slave to manumission (S&K 1838).

LIII: PLURAL AND PAIR-MARRIAGE (Sumner & Keller 1855)

§401. **Monogamy; Pair-Marriage.** (Sumner & Keller 1878)

In Abyssinia there is a rare religious **form of marriage** that binds the spouses, like the Roman patrician *confarreatio*-union, for the whole of life; but it is not popular (S&K 1879-80).

the mother-child bond is instinctive and has functioned regardless of the developmental stage of the mores.

83:7.2 Among primitive peoples only about one half the marriages proved satisfactory.

The most frequent cause for separation was barrenness,

which was always **blamed** on the wife;

and **childless wives** were believed to **become snakes** in the spirit world.

Under the more primitive mores, divorce was had at the option of the man alone,

and these standards have persisted to the twentieth century among some peoples.

83:7.3 As the mores evolved, certain tribes developed two **forms of marriage**: the ordinary, which permitted divorce,

and the priest marriage, which did not allow for separation.

LII: DISSOLUTION OF WEDLOCK
(Sumner & Keller 1831)

§392.* **Divorce.** (Sumner & Keller 1831)

To be noted also is the fact that the passage of property, in the form of **purchase-price** or **dowry**, by acting as a bar to the dissolution of marriage, **stabilizes** the relation (S&K 1833).

The inauguration of wife **purchase** and wife **dowry**, by introducing a property penalty for marriage failure, did much to lessen separation.

And, indeed, many modern unions are **stabilized** by this ancient property factor.

83:7.4 The social pressure of community standing and property privileges has always been potent in the maintenance of the marriage taboos and mores. Down through the ages marriage has made steady progress and stands on advanced ground in the modern world, notwithstanding that it is threateningly assailed by widespread dissatisfaction among those peoples where individual choice—a new liberty—figures most largely. While these upheavals of adjustment appear among the more progressive races as a result of suddenly accelerated social evolution, among the less advanced peoples marriage continues to thrive and slowly improve under the guidance of the older mores.

83:7.5 The new and sudden substitution of the more ideal but extremely individualistic love motive in marriage for the older and long-established property motive, has unavoidably caused the marriage institution to become temporarily unstable.

Man's marriage motives have always far transcended actual marriage morals, and in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the Occidental ideal of marriage has suddenly far outrun the self-centered and but partially controlled sex impulses of the races. The presence of large numbers of unmarried persons in any society indicates the temporary breakdown or the transition of the mores.

83:7.6 The real test of marriage, all down through the ages, has been that continuous intimacy which is inescapable in all family life.

LVIII: RETROSPECTIVE (Sumner & Keller 2041)

§433. **The Pair-Marriage Monopoly.**
(Sumner & Keller 2052)

Modern people, however, **educated** as they are to demand the earth, find fault with everything which does not minister to their luxury and **vanity**. When two persons of this habit of mind

try to live together in wedlock in this world of ours, they do not **succeed**,

for the relation demands concession and **self-effacement** from both parties (S&K 2056).

Two pampered and spoiled youths, **educated** to expect every indulgence and full gratification of **vanity** and ego,

can hardly hope to make a great **success** of marriage and home building—

a lifelong partnership of **self-effacement**, compromise, devotion,

and unselfish dedication to child culture.

LII: DISSOLUTION OF WEDLOCK
(Sumner & Keller 1831)

§393. **Divorce as an Adjustment.** (Sumner & Keller 1839)

Certain of the qualities desirable in marriage have been objects of verification prior to marriage. Others of them come to the test in courtship, though that period, where it exists, is too full of **romance** and **imagination** to allow of much sound judgment (S&K 1840).

Dissolution of wedlock as an allowance for inevitable error is doubtless salutary in special cases; but **divorce** as a means of **easily** escaping the consequences of flightiness of mind, or of securing freedom from institutional restriction upon individual desire,

leads back toward the crude stages from which, with pain and toil, we have **emerged** (S&K 1841).

83:7.7 The high degree of **imagination** and fantastic **romance** entering into courtship

is largely responsible for the increasing divorce tendencies among modern Occidental peoples, all of which is further complicated by woman's greater personal freedom and increased economic liberty.

Easy divorce, when the result of lack of self-control or failure of normal personality adjustment,

only leads directly back to those crude societal stages from which man has **emerged** so recently and as the result of so much personal anguish and racial suffering.

83:7.8 But just so long as society fails to properly educate children and youths, so long as the social order fails to provide adequate premarital training, and so long as unwise and immature youthful idealism is to be the arbiter of the entrance upon marriage, just so long will divorce remain prevalent.

And in so far as the social group falls short of providing marriage preparation for youths, to that extent must divorce function as the social safety valve which prevents still worse situations during the ages of the rapid growth of the evolving mores.

83:7.9 The ancients seem to have regarded marriage just about as seriously as some present-day people do. And it does not appear that many of the hasty and unsuccessful marriages of modern times are much of an improvement over the ancient practices of qualifying young men and women for mating.

XLI: WHAT MADE MARRIAGE
(Sumner & Keller 1485)

§333. **Inconsistency in the Sex-Mores.**
(Sumner & Keller 1492)

Then, to complete the picture of **inconsistency**, the code has made it a conventional virtue to **exalt love** and marriage

while interdicting objective **examination** of either (S&K 1493).

The great **inconsistency** of modern society is to **exalt love** and to idealize marriage

while disapproving of the fullest **examination** of both.

8. THE **IDEALIZATION** OF MARRIAGE

LVIII: RETROSPECTIVE (Sumner & Keller 2041)

§430.* **The Function of Idealization.**
(Sumner & Keller 2043)

83:8.1 Marriage which culminates in the home is indeed man's most exalted institution, but it is essentially human;

In the Vulgate version of the Bible the word here [*i.e.* in Ephesians 5:32] rendered as “mystery” is translated “sacramentum.” But for this accident of language it is very doubtful whether marriage ever would have been put in the list of sacraments. A sacrament is a means of edification in religious life; the other six sacraments are all religious observances which enter into religious life and produce religious results in experience. Marriage, on the contrary, is no more a sacrament than trade or agriculture (S&K IV 1169).

it should never have been called a sacrament.

The Sethite priests made marriage a religious ritual; but for thousands of years after Eden, mating continued as a purely social and civil institution.

83:8.2 The likening of human associations to divine associations is most unfortunate. The union of husband and wife in the marriage-home relationship is a material function of the mortals of the evolutionary worlds. True, indeed, much spiritual progress may accrue consequent upon the sincere human efforts of husband and wife to progress, but this does not mean that marriage is necessarily sacred. Spiritual progress is attendant upon sincere application to other avenues of human endeavor.

83:8.3 Neither can marriage be truly compared to the relation of the Adjuster to man

The Apostle exhorts men to love their wives and women to be submissive to their husbands and, in so doing, uses Christ's headship and leadership of the Church as a parallel for the relation of husband and wife (S&K IV 1168).

nor to the fraternity of Christ Michael and his human brethren.

The parallel fails at every point (S&K IV 1168).

At scarcely any point are such relationships comparable to the association of husband and wife.

And it is most unfortunate that the human misconception of these relationships has produced so much confusion as to the status of marriage.

83:8.4 It is also unfortunate that certain groups of mortals have conceived of marriage as being consummated by divine action. Such beliefs lead directly to the concept of the indissolubility of the marital state regardless of the circumstances or wishes of the contracting parties. But the very fact of marriage dissolution itself indicates that Deity is not a conjoining party to such unions.

There was at the time [of Christ] a dispute amongst the Jews, some desiring to introduce more stringent usages of divorce, others desiring to continue the existing ones ... When this question was put to Christ, he ... added to the citation from Genesis a more explicit enunciation of the union-of-the-flesh doctrine: "So that they are no more twain but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together let no man put asunder" (S&K IV 1167).

If God has once joined any two things or persons together,

they will remain thus joined until such a time as the divine will decrees their separation.

But, regarding marriage, which is a human institution, who shall presume to sit in judgment, to say which marriages are unions that might be approved by the universe supervisors in contrast with those which are purely human in nature and origin?

[Compare: Though he was the sovereign of this local universe, the Son published to the worlds the fact of the Spirit's equality with him in all endowments of personality and attributes of divine character.... This is, in deed and in truth, the high ideal of the family and the human institution of voluntary marriage (33:3.6).]

83:8.5 Nevertheless, there is an ideal of marriage on the spheres on high. On the capital of each local system the Material Sons and Daughters of God do portray the height of the ideals of the union of man and woman in the bonds of marriage and for the purpose of procreating and rearing offspring.

After all, the ideal mortal marriage is *humanly* sacred.

XLII: THE MARRIAGE-INSTITUTION (Sumner & Keller 1519)

§338. **Scope of the Institution.** (Sumner & Keller 1519)

Marriage has always provided, and never more than today, one of the few grand ranges for idealization.... On all the higher grades of society there floats in the realm of phantasy a conception of the marriage-relation which is ideal, romantic, poetic, never realized, but yet the most enthusiastic **dream** which mortals have ever imagined (S&K 1522).

Few, if any, ever do or can **realize** the idea of marriage that runs through our literature and is professed as a matter of faith in our intercourse with one another (S&K 1522).

83:8.6 Marriage always has been and still is man's supreme **dream** of temporal ideality.

Though this beautiful dream is seldom **realized** in its entirety,

it endures as a glorious ideal, ever luring progressing mankind on to greater strivings for human happiness.

LVIII: RETROSPECTIVE (Sumner & Keller 2041)

§430.* **The Function of Idealization.**
(Sumner & Keller 2043)

If we respect the youthful enthusiasm of lovers and, recoiling from the charge of killing joy, say nothing to discourage it, the result is that in many cases we have in fact laid a trap for those whose disillusionment is bitter. The domain of ideals is necessarily also the domain of disillusionment and disappointment (S&K 2047).

[Compare S&K 2044.]

But young men and women should be taught something of the realities of marriage before they are plunged into the exacting demands of the interassociations of family life;

youthful idealization should be tempered with some degree of premarital disillusionment.

83:8.7 The youthful idealization of marriage should not, however, be discouraged; such dreams are the visualization of the future goal of family life. This attitude is both stimulating and helpful providing it does not produce an insensitivity to the realization of the practical and commonplace requirements of marriage and subsequent family life.

83:8.8 The ideals of marriage have made great progress in recent times; among some peoples woman enjoys practically equal rights with her consort. In concept, at least, the family is becoming a loyal partnership for rearing offspring, accompanied by sexual fidelity.

[The modern ideal ... demands not only that there shall be an exclusiveness in deed but also even in intent and thought. The ideal of marriage is an **extreme** of monopoly—a complete engrossment of the parties each in the other...

This insistence upon the **mutual monopolization** of husband and wife rests, not upon any instinct, but upon standards that are the product of a long course of societal evolution (S&K 1765-66).]

XLII: THE MARRIAGE-INSTITUTION (Sumner & Keller 1519)

§338. **Scope of the Institution.** (Sumner & Keller 1519)

If ... we say that marriage is the institutional relation of **man and woman**, when more or less durable,

as created by the **mores**, defined by the **taboo**, and **enforced by society**, we have what might be called the highest common factor of all forms in the **evolutionary** series that deserve the name of marriage (S&K 1522).

But even this newer version of marriage need not presume to swing so far to the **extreme** as to confer **mutual monopoly** of all personality and individuality.

Marriage is not just an individualistic ideal;

it is the **evolving** social partnership of **a man and a woman**,

existing and functioning under the current **mores**, restricted by the **taboos**, and **enforced by** the laws and regulations of **society**.

83:8.9 Twentieth-century marriages stand high in comparison with those of past ages, notwithstanding that the home institution is now undergoing a serious testing because of the problems so suddenly thrust upon the social organization by the precipitate augmentation of woman's liberties, rights so long denied her in the tardy evolution of the mores of past generations.

83:8.10 [Presented by the Chief of Seraphim stationed on Urantia.]

1. *Compare:* Just as marriage by contract followed marriage by capture, so trade by barter followed seizure by raids (69:4.1).

2. *Compare:* In fact, the actual right of women to propose, in bald and direct form, has lapsed along with the development of civilization. The hardship they suffer in not being able to take the **formal initiative** has been much and romantically bewailed.... The fact remains that woman is emancipated now as never before; and though she may suffer a little through the loss of the actual proposing function, it is not so certain (we are told) that she does not virtually exercise, in an indirect fashion, most of the initiative ascribed to man and which he thinks he has (S&K 1749-50).

3. Several tribes in South America have the custom that the family chief marks a certain figure upon the breasts of the women, upon the horses, and even upon the dogs. It is the mark of his ownership (S&K 306).